

Massachusetts Community Transportation Coordination Conference
May 5, 2015
Funding Strategies Panel

Public Funding Panel with Noah Berger, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Aniko Laszlo, MassDOT

- Berger – Community transit and public transit can be seen as either an infrastructure issue or a safety net issue. Transportation is a very emotional issue. Regional models of coordination are important; each municipality has its own ideas of what it needs and wants, but we can work together to find mutually beneficial opportunities. Current areas of focus at the federal level include reauthorizing MAP-21. The Ladders of Opportunity Program makes funds available for transportation-disadvantaged populations.
- Laszlo – MassDOT's Community Transit Grant Program (CTGP) includes three streams of federal funds: 5310 to improve life and mobility for seniors and people with disabilities, 5339 for bus and bus facilities, and 5311 for rural areas. CTGP also includes Mobility Assistance Program (MAP) funds from the state. MassDOT distributes CTGP funds through a competitive application process. This year \$10.3M was available, and MassDOT received 50% more applications than past years, totaling \$24.8M in requests. Projects must demonstrate that they respond to the region's unmet needs, are based in partnerships and collaboration, and use robust performance metrics. MassDOT supports projects and services that fills gaps and complement each other without duplicating each other. Applicants are encouraged to participate in RCCs to ensure regional collaboration.

Private Funding Panel featuring Anne Marie Boursiquot King, Managing Director, Tufts Health Plan Foundation and Melissa Vanhorn, Director of Community Impact, United Way of Greater Attleboro/Taunton

What is your vision, and how does it relate to transportation?

- King – Our mission is to improve the health and wellness of the diverse communities we serve. We are seeking to move the Commonwealth toward adopting the World Health Organization (WHO) features for age-friendly communities. In terms of transportation, we partnered with another foundation to launch the Independent Transportation Network (ITN) of Greater Boston, a volunteer driver program that has provided 13,000 rides to 500 members. We want to see all the stakeholders in a region coming together to build on what already exists and implement best practices. Collaboration is key – you have to have all the right people around the table.
- Vanhorn – We seek to unite communities for the betterment of all. We engage in capacity building in our region. In terms of transportation, we fund our local transit authority – GATRA – to provide the MedWheels service to help get people to medical appointments when they do not have any other option. We also fund bus passes that some agencies in Taunton give to their consumers. We are flexible and let the experts – GATRA and the agencies – tell us where the needs are. Participating in the RCC has been very helpful to our region in terms of building relationships.

What is your funding cycle?

- King – Letters of inquiry are due July 20. If accepted, we'll ask for a full proposal. If we fund your project, we'll conduct site visits throughout the year.
- Vanhorn – We have a yearly funding cycle. Volunteers from the organizations that collect the money are involved in the process.